

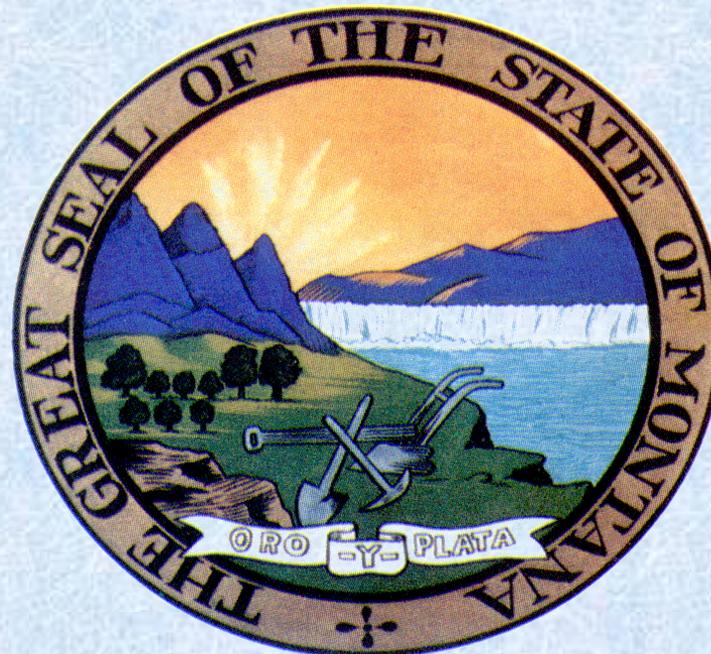
Montana Board of Veterans Affairs

“The people declare that Montana servicemen, servicewomen, and veterans may be given special considerations determined by the legislature”

Article II, Section 35, Montana Constitution

Biennial Report – July 1, 2018

Prepared by: Joe Foster, 324-3741, jofoster@mt.gov
Administrator – MT Veterans Affairs Division



Montana Veteran Demographic Data

Statewide Veteran Population: Source – Dept. of Veterans Affairs, as of 1/06/2017

Total Population	Approx. 98,300
Male Population	Approx. 89,700 - 91%
Female Population	Approx. 8,600 - 9%

American Indian	Approx. 3,500 - 3.5%

Gulf War I / II Era	Approx. 33,700 - 34%
Vietnam War Era	Approx. 34,181 - 35%
Korean Conflict Era	Approx. 6,700 - 6.8%
World War II Era	Approx. 2,700 - 2.7%

Combat Era Veterans	– Approx. 74,800
Peacetime Era Veterans	– Approx. 23,500

Federal VA Health Services Facilities / Utilization: Source – Dept. of Veterans Affairs, State Summary

Number of VA Hospitals	1
Number of Community-Based Outpatient Clinics	14
Number of Vet Centers	5
Number of Veterans Eligible for VA Health Care Enrollment	73,744
Number of Veterans Enrolled in VA Health Care System	47,132

Montana Board of Veterans Affairs

- Mission and Composition -

Mission: Oversee the State of Montana's provision of veterans services, as provided by the Montana Veterans Affairs Division.

<> 20 members; 11 voting, 9 non-voting.

+ **11 voting members**; 10 appointed by Governor, 1 appointed by Montana's eight Tribal Councils (consensus).

- 5 represent geographic regions of the state. *
- 1 is an "at-large" veterans' representative. *
- 1 is the Native American veterans' representative. *
- 1 is Montana's Tribal Councils' consensus appointee. *
- 3 have training, experience or education related to veteran issues.

*** Must be an honorably discharged veteran.**

+ **9 non-voting members** representing: Governor's Office of Indian Affairs / State Dept. of Military Affairs / State Dept. of Public Health and Human Services / U.S. Dept. of Veterans Affairs / U.S. Dept. of Labor / Montana's Congressional Delegation (3) / State Administration and Veterans Affairs Interim Committee.

Montana Veterans Affairs Division

- Mission -

Promote the general welfare of Montana veterans and their families.

THRU:

- Establishment of a statewide network of service for military veterans and their families.
- Provision of services and assistance for all Montana veterans and surviving spouses and dependents; in coordination with associated federal and state agencies, veterans services organizations, private organizations and individuals.
- Management, operation and maintenance of Montana's state veterans cemetery program.
- Assist and advise the general public, governmental agencies, and elected officials regarding veterans services, programs, initiatives and policy.

Montana Veterans Affairs Division

- Major Program Initiatives in FY17/18 -

Veterans Services Outreach:

- ◆ **Board of Veterans Affairs** – Six meetings conducted: 2 in Helena, 1 in Bozeman, 1 in Great Falls, and 2 via teleconference.
- ◆ **Community Outreach** – 9 veterans service office locations with consistent, statewide outreach services provided to 45+ Montana communities, state institutions and Tribal Nations.
- ◆ **Media** – Agency website including service office/cemeteries contact information and outreach schedules, Board meeting minutes, federal VA contact information and “feature” items. Maintained Facebook connection to agency.

State Veterans Cemetery Program:

- ◆ **Eastern Montana State Veterans Cemetery (Miles City)** – Preapplication for VA construction grant approved, now qualified for VA Priority List 1 inclusion.
- ◆ **Montana State Veterans Cemetery (Fort Harrison)** – Preapplication for VA construction grant approved, now qualified for VA Priority List 1. \$1.2 million grounds/facility enhancement project complete – 100% VA funded. Passed National Cemetery Administration inspection/assessment – superior rating; next inspection in five years.
- ◆ **Western Montana State Veterans Cemetery (Missoula)** – Preapplication for VA construction grant approved, pursuing spending authority for the project in 2019 Legislative Session. Once attained, the project will move into the VA’s Priority 1 projects listing.

Veterans Services Operations:

NOTE: A mandated 10% budget reduction resulted in closure of the Lewistown veterans service office, non-fill of two FTEs, and delayed fill (approx. 6 months) of another FTE. All budget reductions and adjustments accomplished and budget stability will be fully attained by end of FY19 (July 2019).

- ◆ **Digit to Digit (D2D)** – Per request of federal VA, Montana selected as one of three states piloting the D2D electronic claims submission program. Pilot program complete and successful, and D2D is now the standard by which benefits claim-work is processed, nationwide.
- ◆ **Veterans Service Officers (VSO)** – Per federal VA data, the financial impact of the state of MT’s VSO work products exceeded – for the first time – over ***\$200 Million*** to MT veterans/families.
- ◆ **Billings VSO Office** – Facility co-location with federal VA Vet Center reinstated and the federal VA is constructing new office space for the Billings VSO Office – construction to begin in FY19.

Montana Veterans Affairs Division

- Organization -

◆ Organizational Personnel and Facility Locations

31 FTE:

- 1 – Administrator
- 1 – Fiscal Analyst / Office Manager
- 1 – Administrative Assistant (unfilled)
- 23 – Veterans Services Officers (1 unfilled)
- 5 – Veterans Cemetery Program

9 Veterans Services Offices:

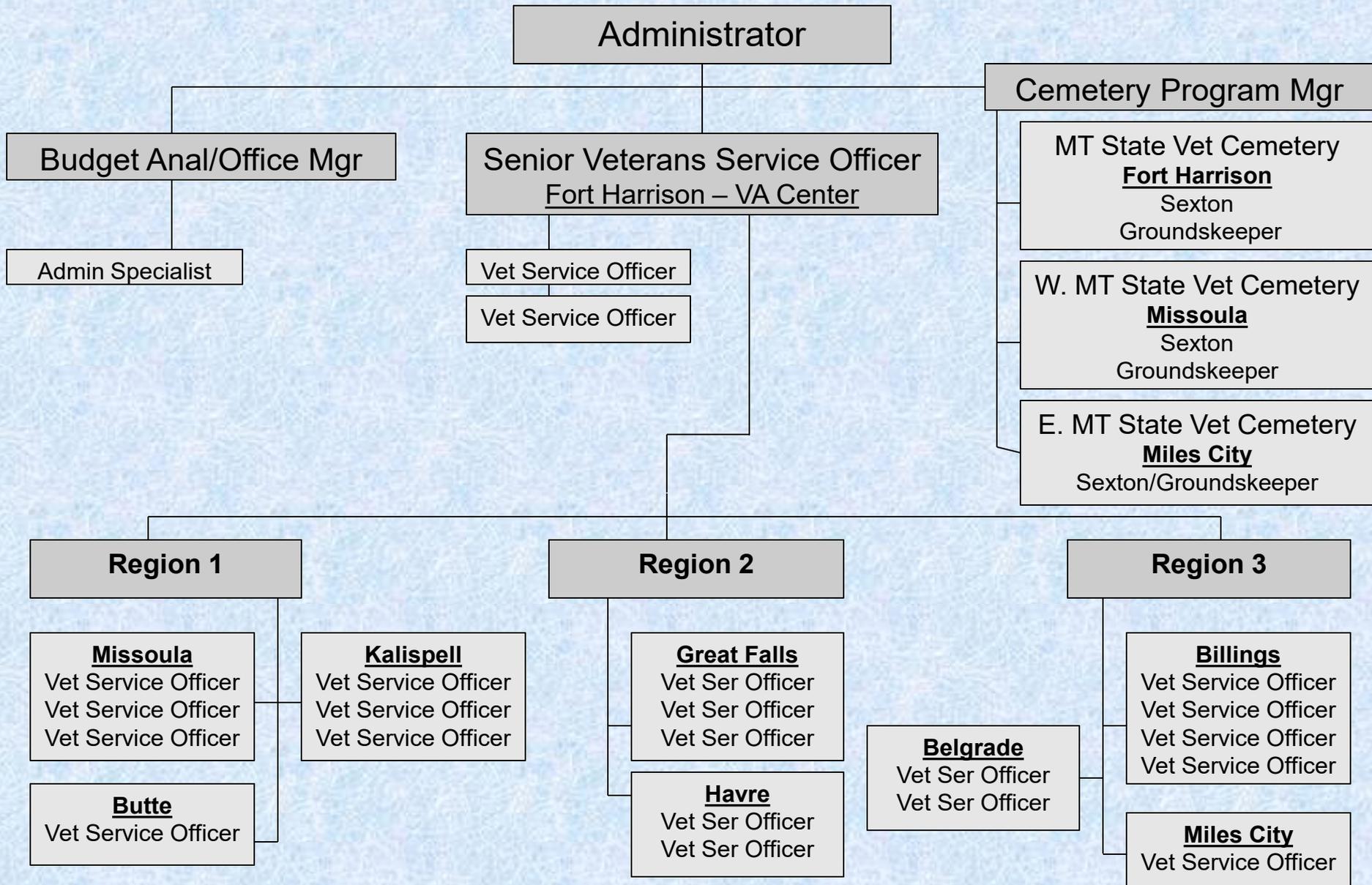
Belgrade – Billings – Butte – Great Falls – Havre
Helena – Kalispell – Miles City – Missoula

3 State Veterans Cemeteries:

Montana State Veterans Cemetery – Fort Harrison (Helena)
Eastern Montana State Veterans Cemetery – Miles City
Western Montana State Veterans Cemetery – Missoula

Administration Office: Fort Harrison (MT National Guard HQ)

Montana Veterans Affairs Division Organizational Chart



Montana Veterans Affairs Division

- Veterans Service Offices and Cemeteries -

Veterans Service Offices:

Belgrade

350 Airport Road
388-4601

Great Falls

600 Central Plaza, #300
452-2265

Kalispell

2989 Hwy 93 North
755-3795

Billings

2795 Enterprise Ave.
248-8579

Havre

232 1st Street W.
265-4225

Miles City

1020 N. Hayes
232-1203

Butte

600 Gilman Ave.
533-0910

Helena

Ft. Harrison VA Center
495-2081

Missoula

1911 Tower Road
542-2501

State Veterans Cemeteries:

Montana State Veterans Cemetery

Ft. Harrison (near Helena)
324-3742

Eastern Montana State Veterans Cemetery

Miles City
853-6963

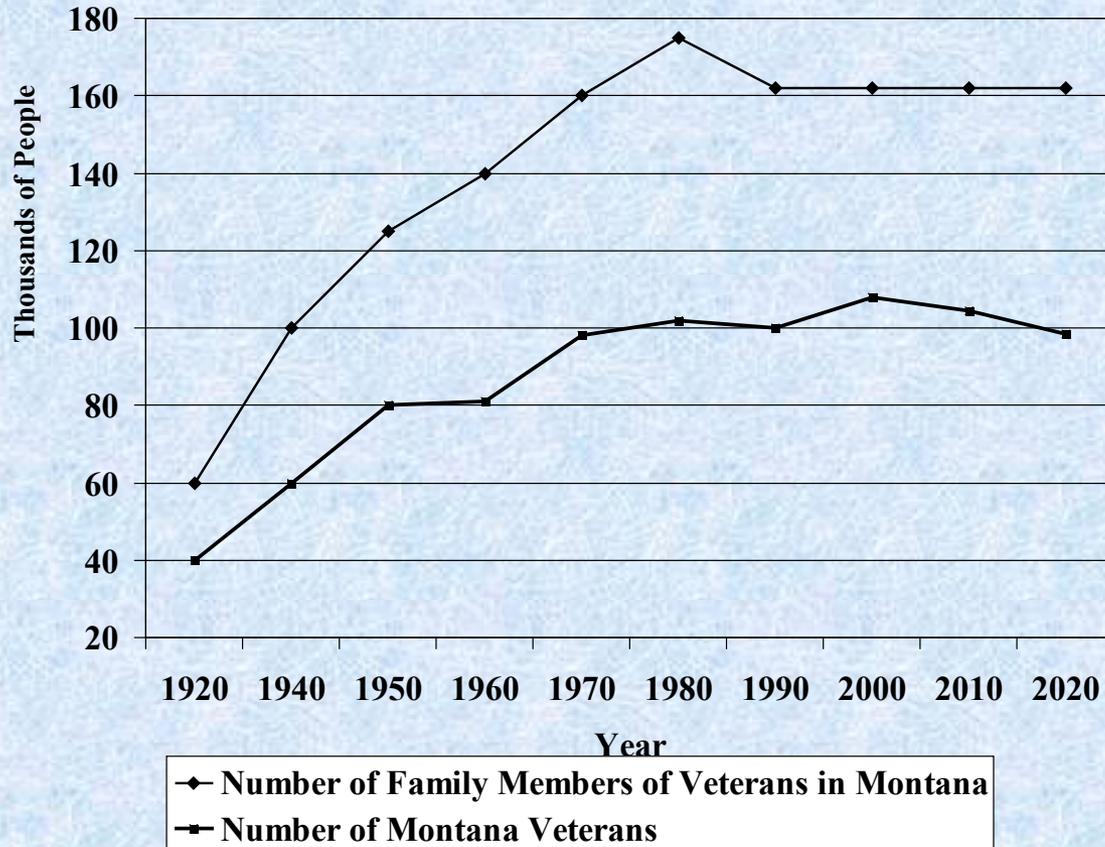
Western Montana State Veterans Cemetery

Missoula - 531-1105

Administration: 324-3740

Montana Veterans Affairs Division

- Montana Veterans and Family Members -



Statistics per 2017 – U.S. Dept. of Veterans Affairs

#2 Per Capita – Montana’s veteran population national ranking.

Veterans: Montana
98,386 (approx)

See Report’s Map for approx. County-Level Veteran Populations

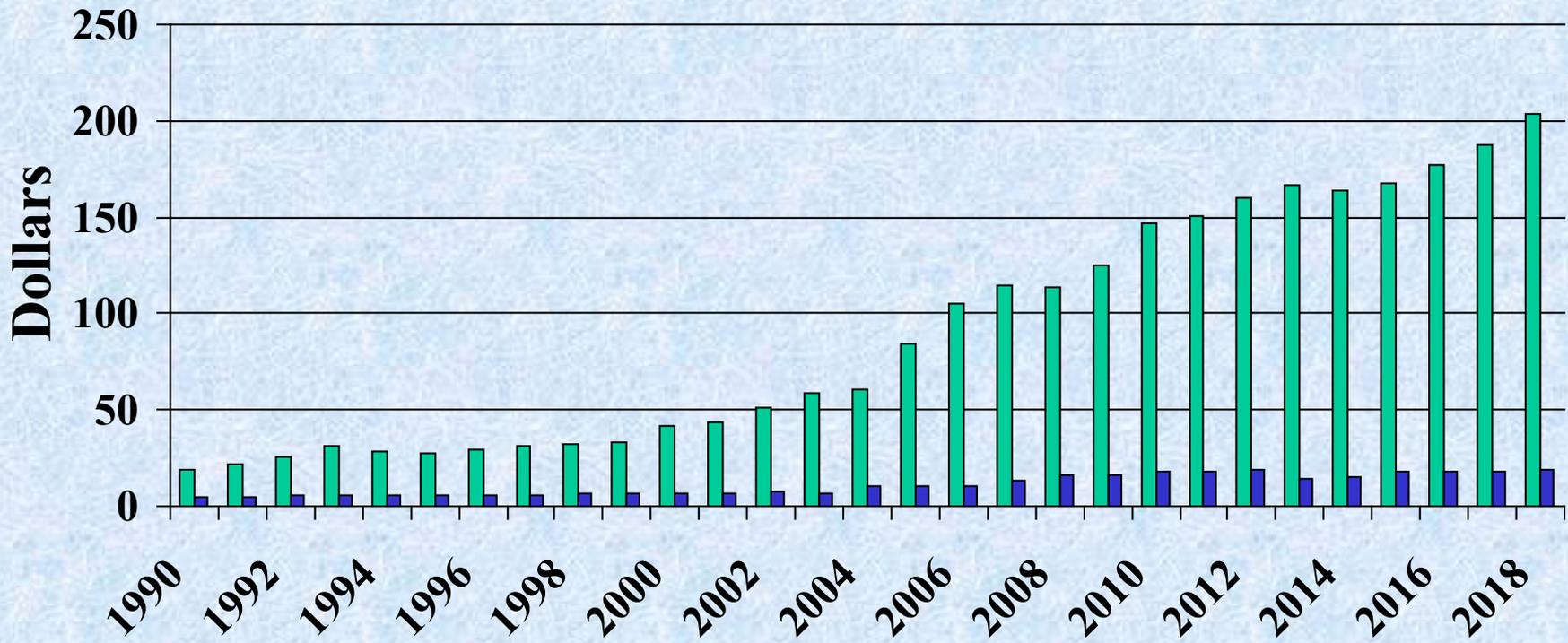
Note: Veteran family members statistics no longer available.

Montana Veterans Affairs Division

- Economic Impact of Agency Work Effort -

For every \$1 of state General/Special Fund invested into the Veterans Services Program, agency staff attained \$108 in federal VA monetary payments to Montana veterans.

FY18 MVAD Budget (blue) = \$ 1,886,216 FY18 Fed VA Payments (green) = \$203,843,032



Montana Veterans Affairs Division

- State Veteran Cemeteries -

Montana State Veterans Cemetery – Fort Harrison / Est. 1988

<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>Burials</u>
2017	214
2018	198

Total since 1988: 4185

Eastern Montana State Veterans Cemetery – Miles City / Est. 2002

<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>Burials</u>
2017	42
2018	30

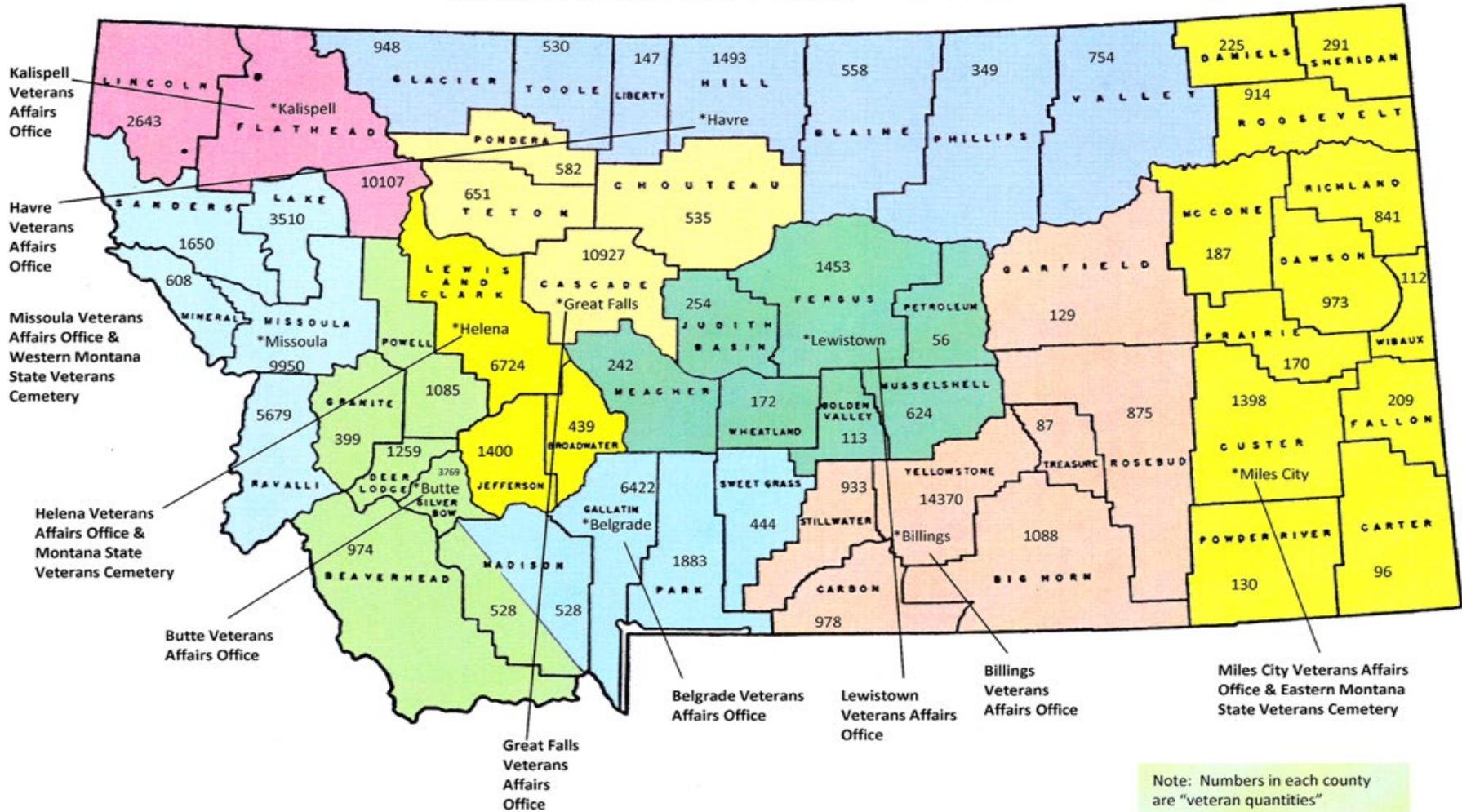
Total since 2002: 615

Western Montana State Veterans Cemetery – Missoula / Est. 2008

<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>Burials</u>
2017	162
2018	118

Total since 2008: 1321

Montana Veterans Affairs Division Services Offices and Montana State Veterans Cemeteries



Note: Numbers in each county are "veteran quantities"